Merger of CIFNET with other Institutions

567. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to merge CIFNET with other institutions involved in deep sea fisheries;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that CIFNET has not been able to increase its capacities in the last five years;

(d) the names of bodies or institutions with which CIFNET could be merged suitably;

(e) whether Government propose to conduct any study on the activities of CIFNET; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir. CIFNET has increased its capacity as and when required in the fishery sector.

(d) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(e) and (f) No, Sir. The Institute has expended its capacity by starting new short-term courses and four-year degree course on Fishing and Nautical Science.

Use of Diclofenac

568. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formally recommended the State to reduce the use of diclofenac, something it had been resisting till a linkage with vulture deaths was clear and an alternative was available;

(b) if so, whether the States have also been asked to stop purchasing this veterinary drug for Government dispensaries;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the trials are running very late in this regard;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor;

(f) whether there is no estimates on how much diclofenac is dispensed in the country through Government dispensaries;

(g) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(h) the steps taken to improve the situation in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. State Governments have been requested to restrict the use of Diclofenac and to reduce procuring this drug for Government Veterinary dispensaries.

(d) and (e) The experimentation about the efficacy of Meloxicam, an alternative drug to Diclofenac is at its final stages at Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar.

(f) to (h) Diclofenac is in veterinary use as a non steroid anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) and is prescribed to reduce pain, inflammation and stiffness of musculo-skeleton and are generally procured by the local veterinary authorities of the state Animal Husbandry departments. The State Governments have already been advised to restrict its use and to reduce procuring it for Government Veterinary dispensaries.

Suicides by farmers in Vidarbha

569. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that successive crop failures have resulted in 108 debt-ridden farmers suicide in Vidarbha, between June and November, 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government had announced any *ex-gratia* payment for their dependents;

(d) whether the Minister will take up the issue with the Finance Ministry